



King County Board of Ethics
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KING COUNTY BOARD OF ETHICS MEETING NOTICE

When: Monday, July 19, 1999 at 4:30 p.m.

Where: Bank of California Building; 8th floor
King County Family Support Division Conference Room

AGENDA

1. **Approval of Agenda.** (2 minutes)
2. **Approval of Meeting Minutes of June 21, 1999.** (4 minutes)
3. **Proposed Amendment to the Financial Disclosure Requirement Under the Code of Ethics.** Staff briefing and update on status of proposed amendment. (20 minutes)
4. **Mid-Year Report and Report to State Auditor.** Staff report. Distribution of orientation packets. (20 minutes)
5. **2000 Business Plan and Budget.** Staff report and Board discussion. (15 minutes)
6. **Informal Meeting with Executive.** Report on meeting. (15 minutes)
7. **Board Initiatives and Staff Resources.** Board and staff discussion. (20 minutes)
8. **Miscellaneous Business.** Board and staff discussion. (10 minutes)
 - Ombudsman's Findings on Ethics Complaint 9709-0012E
 - Board member business cards

cc: Ron Sims, King County Executive
King County Councilmembers
Duncan Fowler, Director–Ombudsman, Office of Citizen Complaints
Sheryl V. Whitney, Director, DIAS
James J. Buck, Acting Deputy Director, DIAS
Carl A. Johansen, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney
Arthur Wallenstein, Director, Adult Detention

Minutes of the July 19, 1999 Meeting of the King County Board of Ethics

The July 19, 1999 meeting of the King County Board of Ethics was called to order by Chair Price Spratlen at 4:47 p.m. Board members in attendance were:

Dr. Lois Price Spratlen, Chair
Rev. Paul F. Pruitt
Mr. Roland H. Carlson
Lembhard G. Howell, Esq. had an excused absence.

Others in attendance:

Ms. Catherine A. Clemens, Administrator, King County Board of Ethics
Mr. James J. Buck, Deputy Director, Department of Information and Administrative Services

1. *Proposed Agenda.* Ms. Clemens asked to delete Item #3, Request for Advisory Opinion from the Department of Adult Detention (DAD) and replace it with Proposed Amendment to the Financial Disclosure Requirement Under the Code of Ethics. Ms. Clemens read from an e-mail message received that day from the director of DAD that, due to information recently provided to him related to the issue at hand by the ethics office, he would withdraw his request for the time being. Chair Price Spratlen asked that Item #8 be added to address the status of the Ombudsman's Findings on Ethics Complaint 9709-0012E and board member business cards. With those changes, Mr. Carlson moved the agenda be approved; Rev. Pruitt seconded the motion and the agenda was approved.

2. *Approval of Meeting Minutes of June 21, 1999.* Rev. Pruitt moved to approve the June 21, 1999 meeting minutes; Mr. Carlson seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

3. *Proposed Amendment to the Financial Disclosure Requirement Under the Code of Ethics.* Ms. Clemens informed the Board that Executive Sims filed with the Clerk of the King County Council the proposed amendment, along with his letter of support addressed to The Honorable Louise Miller, Chair, on Thursday, July 15, 1999. Ms. Clemens distributed copies of those documents. Ms. Clemens stated that, at the last meeting, the Board had requested that she produce a one-page 'talking points', along with councilmember addresses, so that they might personally contact members in support of this legislation. Ms. Clemens distributed those documents as well. Mr. Buck noted that the legislation had wide spread support from the executive, directors, board and commission members and employees. Chair Price Spratlen stated she was pleased with the process and gratified that the work of two years had reached fruition. She credited the great level of collaboration for this success.

The Board discussed the best approach to encourage passage by the council, and sought advise from Mr. Buck. Mr. Buck described the process and offered suggestions. After deliberation, the Board directed Ms. Clemens to draft a letter, addressed to Councilmember Miller and under the signature of Chair Price Spratlen. The letter should indicate unanimous Board support, the importance of the legislation and the urgency of passage before November. The Board also directed Ms. Clemens to facilitate setting a meeting among Councilmember Miller, Chair Price Spratlen and Mr. Carlson, which they hope will be the first of regularly scheduled quarterly meetings with Council Chair.

4. *Mid-Year Report and Report to State Auditor.* Ms. Clemens walked the Board through the Mid-Year Report, January 1 through June 30, 1999. The report identified mission, goals and activities for the ethics office and Board thus far in 1999, and tied measurable outcomes to each goal. The Board asked questioned and discussed issues related to training, web site development and the disclosure programs. The Board expressed is approval.

Ms. Clemens informed the Board that the State Auditor's Office had just completed its review of the consultant disclosure program and drew the Board's attention to the information provided to the auditor, including written policies and procedures, the tracking and monitoring log, sample communications and the training packet provided to over 112 county employees who work with contract forms. The training sessions were conducted in cooperation with the Procurement Division, Department of Finance. Ms. Clemens stated that the auditor, upon review of the information, pronounced the program in compliance. She is awaiting written notification.

5. *2000 Business Plan and Budget.* Ms. Clemens introduced the business plan and budget; the plan was reviewed previously during the June 21 meeting. She made note of three specific funding requests: 1) .5 FTE staff support for financial and consultant disclosure programs; 2) one time construction costs for combined storage unit and work area; the total cost to be shared with the Civil Right Commission; and 3) ongoing support for the ethics home page development and maintenance.

Upon Board questions about the web site, Mr. Buck stated that the web is an important way to present information about the government to employees and the public and the executive is very much in support of this means of communication. However, web support does not meet current demand at this time. Chair Price Spratlen asked Mr. Buck about the likelihood of additional dollars for permanent staff support. Mr. Buck was not hopeful due to current and potential decreases in county revenues. The Chair asked what the Board could do to support the excellent work being done now by Ms. Clemens? Mr. Buck suggested Board members continue the relationship building they have already begun with the Executive, and continue to diplomatically press for staff support. Mr. Buck said to keep in mind, when planning meetings, that the Executive finalizes his budget requests in September and the Council votes on the budget in November.

Finally, Ms. Clemens drew the Board's attention to the budget form that would move the Board of Ethics from its present location within Licensing and Regulatory Services to reporting directly to the Director's office. Mr. Buck stated that this was being done for visibility and a closer link to the Executive.

6. *Informal Meeting with Executive.* Chair Price Spratlen reported on the informal meeting with the Executive. She and Mr. Howell met with Executive Sims on June 29, 1999. Ms. Whitney was also in attendance. They discussed the financial disclosure program outcomes and the Executive agreed to send a personal message to directors and board members who had not filed to require their compliance. They discussed appointments and he agreed to reappoint Mr. Howell and appoint Margaret Gordon, Ph.D. The Chair stated that they have been lax in not gaining timely action for appointments, and proposed that the Board notify the Executive and Council three months in advance of any expired terms. Attending to these appointments in an appropriate way demonstrates appreciation and courtesy for volunteers. They also discuss the 2000 business plan and proposed amendment to the financial disclosure requirement. Executive Sims supports the changes and will send the legislation to the Council. The Executive also made two suggestions, including hold the annual reception at noon to attract greater attendance and to investigate county training to focus on the relationships between county employees and those doing business with the county. He felt there was a need to clarify boundaries between the two entities to ensure good government.

Both the Executive and Ms. Whitney expressed approval with the progress made by the Board and Administrator and are more than satisfied with the work being accomplished. Mr. Carlson mentioned Executive Sims' positive and laudatory comments at the Washington State Ethics Conference about the work of the Board and Administrator and their impact on county government.

7. *Board Initiatives and Staff Resources.* Ms. Clemens drew the Board's attention to the ethics office 1999 work plan, approved in January. She explained that office resources, including budget and staff time, are finite and asked that these factors be addressed whenever new initiatives are introduced. After discussion, Mr. Carlson stated three solutions: 1) setting and staying with priorities; 2) continue to identify 'loaned' staff; and 3) 'deal making' or working with Mr. Buck and Ms. Whitney to provide consistent support when needed. Ms. Clemens noted that sporadic support requires a good deal of oversight and training, and the Board agreed. Chair Price Spratlen suggested looking for recurring activities and find support through DIAS. Rev. Pruitt stated that these suggestions are not to ignore new initiatives, but to assure the value in what we are already doing. Ms. Clemens asked if there were ways she should keep the Board informed of work load and competing demands, other than the regularly scheduled meetings. Mr. Carlson asked that she be clear regarding these issues and focus on the priorities, asking for Board clarification, if necessary.

8. Miscellaneous Business. Ombudsman's Findings on Ethics Complaint 9709-0012E. The Chair asked for the status of this complaint. Ms. Clemens stated that the Board had not received a request for appeal by the deadline date of July 12, so the findings stood and no action was required. Business cards. The Board discussed the need for business cards for board members. Members decided that, in light of potential appointments and competing budget needs at this time, the issue of cards would be addressed at a later date.

Ms. Clemens distributed new Board Member Orientation and Reference Notebooks which include Board and county directories, Board history, mission and goals, County Charter and Code of Ethics, ethics policies and procedures, and the Advisory Opinion Index and Summary. She stated that a notebook will be provided to each new member upon appointment; updates will be provided, as necessary. Chair Price Spratlen acknowledged the quality and usefulness of these books and suggested an orientation session for each new member.

At 6:15 p.m., Rev. Pruitt moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Carlson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.

Approved this ____ day of _____, 1999 by the King County Board of Ethics.

Signed for the
Board: _____

Dr. Lois Price Spratlen, Chair